

## Oklahoma State Department of Health · Vaccines for All Children



The federal Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) provides vaccines for low-income children through funding to county Health Departments (CHD's). An unintended consequence of this program is that Federal Vaccines for Children (VFC) guidelines prohibit persons with the ability to pay (insurance or other form of payment) from receiving VFC vaccines at County Health Departments (CHDs), assuming that these persons will receive vaccines from private providers.

The issue is that few private providers purchase and stock needed vaccines. This is due in part to cost and speed at which vaccines pass their shelf life, making stocking vaccines a gamble that rarely pays for private providers. In rural areas this problem is exacerbated due to extreme healthcare provider shortages and few corner drugstores that provide vaccinations making access to basic preventive health services for insured Oklahomans unnecessarily difficult.

In order to allow any family, regardless of ability to pay, access to vaccines for their children at CHD's, the Vaccines for All Children program would use the appropriations request of \$2,687,645 to fund the purchase and administration of vaccines at CHD's using

existing State Department of Health infrastructure.

The amount of appropriations requested is for seed money and will diminish as insurance is billed or citizens pay for vaccines.

This initiative will improve statewide vaccination rates (47th in the nation for two-year-old immunization rates in 2013<sup>i</sup>) by allowing all Oklahomans the option to purchase vaccines from County Health Departments (CHDs).



Studies show that increased immunization rates contribute to the reduction of the spread of preventable diseases; one dollar spent on childhood vaccines saves a potential \$16.50 in future health costs.<sup>ii</sup>

This means significant amounts of taxpayer and insurance dollars are not spent on curing diseases that could have otherwise have been prevented with an improved immunization rate.



<sup>i</sup> [http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/coverage/nis/child/tables/13/tab03\\_antigen\\_state\\_2013.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/coverage/nis/child/tables/13/tab03_antigen_state_2013.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16330737>